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Whereas, The Institute having been informed of the death of John W. Priest, one of its members, therefore

Resolved, That the Institute expresses and desires to put upon record its sincere regret at the loss of one, who, professionally and personally, was highly esteemed by his brethren of this body.

After a discussion on copyright of Architectural designs, the meeting adjourned to Tuesday, Sept. 6th.

By order,

R. M. HUNT, Secretary.

## Foreign Correspondence, Items, etc.

ITALY.—The statue of Venus, lately found in Rome, and which is said to be the most beautiful antique statue that has been exhumed for a hundred years, has become the property of a Russian.—The Campana collection is to remain in Europe, the Spanish Government, according to late accounts, being in negotiation for its purchase. The Marquis Campana was, as our readers know, a defaulter to the Papal government, and to reimburse itself, the government seized his collection. It is said that the conditions of its confiscation permit the collection to be sold, and if it can be sold at an advance upon the government's claim, the balance is to go to its former owner. The negotiations with the Spanish government are said to favor this object. The suggestion to purchase the Campana collection for this country was a somewhat grand idea, and it was not impossible that some wealthy man might have carried it out, for grand ideas occasionally provoke grand freaks. But we had no faith in it. Now that the opportunity is gone, however, other good and noble ideas remain to stimulate ambition of this sort. Let somebody present a complete set of statues, consisting of the finest examples of Greek Art, to our public schools; or, what is still better, erect some original design in sculpture, on one of our thoroughfares, *not* of a military character or of any *quasi* patriot, but a subject of ideal import to commemorate something besides mere personal glory, and prove that our times cherish other ideas than that of the deification of success. Our public taste, so far as one can get at it through public Art, is half Egyptian, and the other half like that of the ancient Romans, who stole or bought the symbols of their divinities from the Greeks, Roman Art being scarcely more than busts and statues of deified emperors.—“Certain people in society,” says a correspondent, “appear to great advantage when they are in a bell-house condition; leisure or repose with them begets apathy. The Italians, among nations, are such a people. Italian Art and literature prospered only when the country was torn to pieces by internal dissension; they were born out of the agonies of strife as is most strikingly apparent in the career of Dante. Italy, according to one of its best historians, has passed through 7,200 revolutions, and has exhibited the horrors of over 700 massacres, and this, too, without including the butcheries of the late war. For one, I am quite content to have Italy in a state of confusion. I wish that its duchies and kingdoms might be let alone, and that a constant rivalry might be kept up one with another, and constant fighting, too. The Greeks were cut up into little states, always opposed to each other, and so were the middle-aged Italians, and do not the noblest feeling and thoughts of mankind reflect themselves in the Greek and Italian art and literature? This modern principle of centralization, whether illustrated by a republican confederation or by an

imperial despotism, is a bad one; states, like individuals, act and appear best when thrown upon their own responsibility. . . . So far as Art is concerned, there is a change taking place in Italy. Instead of persisting in feebly imitating the grand style of the old masters, the Italian artists, like sensible prodigals, who find they can waste but not make an inheritance, are reforming by coming down to the world of life, nature, and feeling around them. They are falling into the world-prevailing taste for *genre* subjects, anecdotes on canvas, pretty conceits, incidents of humor or pathos on a small scale, and a wide range of historical facts. This change of aim is, doubtless, due to the influx of wealthy foreigners into Italy, and the great success of foreign resident artists. I would not assert that this lower style of Art is in itself noble; far from it. I mean only to hint at the prospective advantage to the Italian artist of a change of aim, that change which is marked by casting aside a superstitious and vain competition with ancient genius, for the actual condition and sympathies of the present day, which, whatever may be its standard of beauty or truth, the artist is obliged to reflect by his art, in order to be recognized now or hereafter.”

PARIS.—That honored veteran of European science, Humboldt, is to have a statue placed to his memory in the halls of Versailles. The execution of the work has been intrusted to M. Dumont, the author of the noble figure that surmounts the column of the Bastille.—It is said that picture sales in Paris are becoming rarer and rarer, owing, perhaps, more to lack of purchasers than to any deficiency of supply, or if not to a lack of buyers, to an absence of that quality of art which tempts them to buy. Certain it is that good works of art bring high prices, and that mediocre works, the innumerable transcripts of still life, animals and trifling sentiments, are becoming of less account. Genuine old masters and popular favorites, however, still seduce amateurs into opening their purses. A Rosa Bonheur, “Sheep at Pasture,” a small work, dull and heavy in effect, says a French critic, was sold at auction lately for the sum of 4,500fr. Nothing but the excessive scarcity of this lady's works can account for the high prices they bring. Frenchmen do not seem to covet her works so ferociously as the English or the Dutch. Of the old masters, a sketch by Rubens, called “The Triumph of the Church,” brought 7,900fr., and a Ribera, “The Strolling Musician,” 2,700fr.—Among the deaths of eminent persons in France, that of Achille Collas is not the last to be noticed. Collas was the inventor of a machine by which reduced duplicates of classic statues are made, so that the copies preserve the spirit and perfect proportions of the originals. The Collas reductions are famous. It is by this mechanical process that we have the beautiful bronze copies of the best Greek statues, also of the works of the middle ages that alone, as copies, satisfy the admirer of these master-pieces. Collas, at the commencement of his career, constructed a machine for numismatic engraving, otherwise called medallion engraving, which was the first attempt in this branch of art. He also, it is said, engraved for the pontifical government a bankbill that could not possibly be counterfeited. Having been the instrument for popularizing Art through true copies of the best sculpture the world has seen, Collas is entitled to the name of a great educator of the people. We have only to add that the Collas reductions in plaster, marble or bronze, and of all sizes from one to six feet high, are easily procured, and at fair prices, and that as statues or statuettes representing antique sculpture, they are the only ones worth having.—The Paris Exhibition of works of

Art closed on the 10th of July. The most notable feature of the exhibition this season is the lottery by which a number of works of Art have been distributed, that would not otherwise have found a market. About fifty works have been bought and distributed.

ENGLAND.—The decorations and frescoes to adorn the interior of the new houses of parliament are to be executed under the direction of the Commissioners of the Fine Arts. Mr. Malise is to receive £3,500 for two large frescoes, to be painted on the lower part of the walls of the Royal Gallery. One compartment is to illustrate "Waterloo, the meeting of Wellington and Blucher," and the other subject is, "Trafalgar, the Death of Nelson." In the Peers' robing-room the subject is "Justice on Earth and its development in Law and Judgment," to be painted by J. R. Herbert, for £9,000. Mr. Cope is to depict the "Great Contest which commenced with the meeting of the Long Parliament," in a corridor which contains eight compartments, the sum appropriated for a fresco in each one being £600.

GERMANY.—We obtain a few critical remarks on German Art from the Brussels correspondent of a foreign periodical. He discourses upon an exhibition in that city, last July, of cartoons, by leading artists of Germany,—STEINLE, SOHNORR, BENDEMAN, VON SCHWINDT, HUBNER, and more particularly of its masters, RETHEL, KAULBACH and CORNELIUS. The last named represent the German school in its highest development; they are its great masters; one can scarcely err in his appreciation of them. We find in their compositions and in their interpretation of the beautiful, every quality of superior minds, energy, an almost terrific power, and a degree of boldness before which everything seems compelled to yield. Regarding the entire German school as homogeneous, that is to say, considering the labor of all its artists as the work of science and study rather than the inspiration of feeling, the result of which is to lead one to fancy that all its paintings might have been the work of one hand, the writer says that Rethel, Kaulbach and Cornelius are the climax of a system, the perfection of an art which has its fixed laws like algebra and the movements of the stars. Among the cartoons exhibited at Brussels, Cornelius has seven, of which "The Destruction of Troy" is the most important. In Germany, Cornelius is compared with Michael Angelo; he has, indeed, some of the qualities of the Italian Giant, his savage grandeur which overwhelms you, and a masterly expression of human anatomy. Cornelius is more a sculptor than a painter, and Greek art pursues him like a nightmare or like a mentor. Kaulbach exhibits in this exhibition two cartoons, "Greece in the time of Homer," and "The Satirical History of Humanity." This last is an allegorical frieze, executed in color upon the walls of the new museum at Berlin, and is a composition full of spirit, humor and thought, when one is familiar with the explanatory text. In it Kaulbach has portrayed every folly, every weakness, every glory, every misery of man and of society. And yet who would assert that this frieze would not have been more successful if its ideas had been embodied in writing instead of in painting? We now come to the cartoons of Rethel he who, perhaps, among all the talent that has sprung from these inflexible laws, has the most individuality. He exhibits four cartoons, the subjects of which are drawn from the history of Charlemagne, intermingled with legends. There is more simplicity in the grandeur of Rethel's figures than in those of Cornelius; they aim less to impress the observer, and for that reason, perhaps, impress one the more; he is less pre-occupied

with the style of other artists, and seems to abandon himself with more sincerity to his own natural inspiration. To sum up, the Germans are not painters; they are philosophers and *littérateurs* who make use of certain processes to render *ideas*. They appeal only to the reasoning faculty. Their cartoons (drawings) are remarkable; their frescoes are horrible to look at; these are *colored* with violent, discordant, impossible tints, without any harmonic refinement or grace. With reference to the distinctions and influence of style, the writer says: Each country, or rather each degree of latitude, has its specific character, its laws, its customs, its range of thought. The French, neo-Greek equally with the English pre-Raphaelite systems are simply absurd; these systems are maintained by artists who thus consciously avow their impotence. Unable to be themselves, they try to borrow from others qualities which have not come to them through observation; they strive for a talent which has not germinated in the study of the natural phenomena of human machinery, of its enlightenment, of effects, and of causes. And is it characteristic of our epoch that we must ever do over again what has once been done? Is it obligatory on us to encourage such weaknesses? Whenever artists are to be employed, all that can be done is to say to them, "Work according to your own inspiration!" What would Rembrandt have said if anybody had ventured to tell him that the work he was doing was not *high Art*, that it was absolutely essential to imitate the style of Raphael? *Literary painting*, in conclusion, is only possible in Germany, where they love complicated designs, where history is lax by being coupled with legends, where allegory is regarded as the chief instrument with which to impress the multitude, and where mysticism, reflected by Overbeck, is still one of its great forces.

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## THE CRAYON.

NEW YORK, SEPTEMBER, 1859.

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### Sketchings.

DOMESTIC ART GOSSIP.

BEING somewhat behindhand in our chronicle of artistic productions, we recall to mind various works that have been noted for our gossip.

Eastman Johnson had upon his easel (when we were last in his studio) a small canvas that glows with beauty. The subject is a girl of the Evangeline order, spinning. She is looking out of the canvas with all lustrous eyes, and presents such beautiful features in such an atmosphere of low-toned, harmonious color, that one quite forgets whether there was any action intended by the artist, to meet the common inquiry, "What is she doing?" It is one of these works of art that appeal to us silently, without the aid of symbol or story.

Gray has completed a small picture, designed to illustrate a passage in Longfellow's poem of "The Building of the Ship;" one of the best specimens of coloring that our school can exhibit. The lines of the poem which have suggested the picture afford the best description of it.

"And when the hot, long day was o'er,  
The young man at the master's door  
Sat with the maiden, calm and still;  
And within the porch, a little more  
Removed beyond the evening chill"